

The MIGHTY EIGHTH VOICE



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AF Outstanding Unit Award

Air Combat Command has awarded 8th Air Force the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor for the period of June 1, 2001 - May 31, 2003. The "Mighty Eighth" was cited for their role in Operations NOBLE EAGLE, ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM.

News subscription service

Air Force Link, the Air Force's premier Web site, has launched a new subscriptions management page. From this Web page, people can manage their subscriptions to a variety of news and information services delivered via e-mail.

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August 26



Watching and waiting

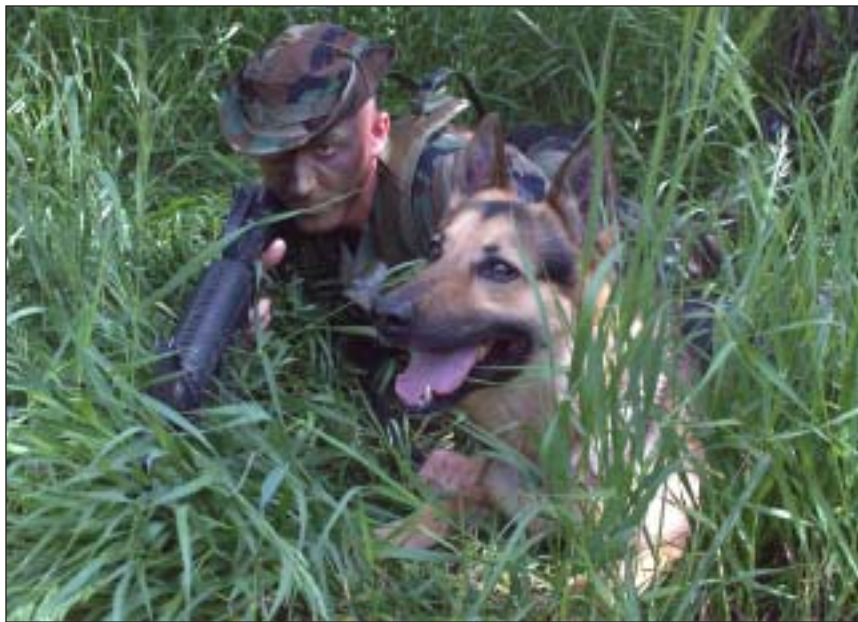


photo by Staff Sgt. Jocelyn Rich

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. -- Senior Airman David Mathieu, a military working dog handler, and his partner, Bak, take part in an air base ground-defense exercise here recently. Mathieu is assigned to the base's 5th Security Forces Squadron.

8AF CAOC gets overhaul

By Maj. Nori LaRue

8th Air Force Public Affairs

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La. — Eighth Air Force's Combined Air and Space Operation Center (CAOC) here is getting a major internal overhaul and vamped-up telecommunications capabilities to the tune of \$3.5 million.

"We have taken the best ideas from all of the CAOCs out there in determining our new layout. Certainly, the CAOCs overseas are state-of-the-art, world-class facilities," said Col Seve Wilson, 608th Air Operations Group Commander and 8th Air Force, Direc-

tor of Operations. "When ours is complete, I think it will be right on par with those facilities."

Approximately 5,000 square feet of space was gained from the 49th Test Squadron and some 2nd Communications Squadron members being relocated out of the building. This additional space will allow the Special Compartment Information Facility (SCIF) to be relocated inside the building. In the past, they have utilized temporary SCIFs outside the building.

"The SCIF capability allows us to bet-

• See CAOC, page 7

Global Presence...Global Influence...Global Responsibility

Our values...do you measure up?

By Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Ledoux
8th Air Force Command Chief

As I travel around Eighth Air Force, I can't help but be impressed by the quality of talent we have in the command. No where else in the world can an airman straight out of technical school or a lieutenant straight out of college be given the level of responsibility that we as an Air Force bestow on them. They impress us with their level of expertise and commitment each day.

I personally send my thanks to each and every one of you for your performance and dedication to our war effort. Whether you were involved in Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, or filled a support role back home, you performed magnificently and are to be congratulated for a job well done. You have certainly displayed service before self, and you have a very grateful nation supporting each and every one of you.

Now that many of you have returned home, I'd like to offer three suggestions to help get us back on track:

First is a need to step back in time to basic training and remember what we learned about military image. It's important to set the right example whether you're the subordinate, supervisor, first sergeant, chief, commander, or anyone else in the chain of command. When we wear our uniform, we should do so properly. Hats should be worn where appropriate, hands should not be in your pockets, shoes need to be shined, and uniforms need to be pressed. Earrings have their own guidelines and everyone should be familiar with them.

Displaying the right image is important whether on or off duty and whether anyone is looking or not. Our cornerstone core value is integrity and defines who we are and the behavior that is expected at all times. One often overlooked violation deals with wearing inappropriate sunglasses. Many of the

sunglasses we wear are not in line with the AFI on personal appearance.

My question to you is this. When was the last time you actually read AFI 36-2903? Maybe it's time to look at it again given the number of changes we've gone through.

Secondly, the customs and courtesies we display to each other show our respect for people. I think we do a pretty good job here, but as always we can improve.



Chief MSgt. Jeffrey Ledoux

"...you performed magnificently and are to be congratulated for a job well done. You have certainly displayed service before self, and you have a very grateful nation supporting each and every one of you."

Chief Master Sgt. Jeffrey Ledoux
8th Air Force Command Chief

When was the last time you called someone lower in rank by their rank and last name instead of their first name? Are supervisors setting the right example here?

Often, I'm told by mid-level supervisors that our airman do not listen to them. In many instances, the fix lies with the same people making the statement. By letting your subordinates call you by your first name, you are in fact giving approval for disobeying the rules and have started a breakdown in discipline. How can they tell what is right or wrong if you as the supervisor choose to follow only the rules you want to follow.

Another courtesy deals with respect to rank. When was the last time you stood up when an officer or senior NCO came into your office area? No matter where you work, paying proper courtesies to rank by standing up and acknowledging them is a sign of an Air Force professional.

Finally, we have some great leaders in our Air Force that set a good example each day. As I talk to our younger Air Force members, I find that our supervisors, although among the best in the world, may not be taking enough time to really supervise and lead their troops. Do you really know your troops...have you seen where they live...do you

know what they do on weekends to entertain themselves...do you know what hobbies they have... when was the last time you sat down and mentored them?

It's also important to recognize their performance by submitting them for awards and decorations when warranted. I certainly know how busy you are, but I'm asking if you feel you could do a better job at being a supervisor, then I ask you to take the time to be the best. After all, "excellence in all we do" is one of our values we signed up to.

There's no doubt that there are other areas we could focus on. Our senior leaders continually guide us along a path to success. However, if you ask me, focusing on these three fundamental areas is a great place to start.

Did you know?

♦Core values are those essential moral principles or beliefs that are held in the highest regard by an individual or group. The Air Force core values—Integrity First, Service before Self, and Excellence in All We Do—represent the Air Force's firm convictions about the nature of our personal character, our commitment to each other and our nation, and the manner in which we perform our service.

From "50 More Questions Every Airman Can Answer."

Blended wing is 'one team, one fight'

Administrative issues remain, but first Guard and active-duty unit pairing performs well in Iraq

By Laura M. Colarusso

Air Force Times staff writer

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Think merging active-duty and Air National Guard personnel into one wing is tough? Try sending the unit to combat three months later.

Such was the case for the 116th Air Control Wing, which formed in October and sent more than 600 people and nine Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Approximately 10 percent of the flight crews and 25 percent of the maintainers deployed were from the Guard.

The deployment was seen as a major trial for the "blended wing," as the Air Force refers to it. Some skeptics predicted the merge would create cultural difficulties.

But top Air Force officials are calling the experiment a success.

"General Jumper and I are proud of the 116th's performance during Operation Iraqi Freedom," Secretary James Roche said in a written statement. "The mission is far from over, of course, but reports so far indicate the blended wing validated its conceptual promise in real combat operations."

The unit, which performs surveillance missions identifying and tracking potential targets, also received high praise for its efforts in Iraq from battle managers located at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia, wing officials said.

The road to Iraq

Air Combat Command's 93rd Air Control Wing and the Guard's 116th Bomb Wing, which used to fly B-1 bombers, combined to form the 116th Air Control Wing. Both units were stationed



photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Hannen

Major. Robert Comwell and Lt. Col. Keith Turner, E-8 Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System pilots deployed from the Georgia Air National Guard, clean their windshield before taking off for a mission April 21. JSTARS crews flew missions 24 hours a day in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from a forward-deployed location in Southeast Asia. The deployment was a major trial for the "blended wing" and was the first since the unit merged active duty and Air National Guard personnel into a single wing in October 2002.

at Robins Air Force Base.

The merger was an appeasement of sorts. The 116th Bomb Wing was about to lose its mission due to an Air Force decision to cut its B-1 fleet by a third.

Plans originally called for the integration to take place in October 2004. The 93rd would remain the combat-ready wing while personnel from the 116th trained and prepared for their new mission.

Instead, the 116th Air Control Wing — known as a Future Total Force unit because it brings together active-duty and Guard personnel under one commander — was established two years early.

"This thing was termed a shotgun wedding," said Col. Tom Lynn, the 116th commander. "It was the merger of two families, so anytime you have the merger of two families you have normal growing pains."

A little more than 90 days after that "shotgun wedding," the first batch of

total-force newlyweds were off to an undisclosed location to support operations in the Middle East.

Despite the hurried pace, unit members coming back from Operation Iraqi Freedom said they felt little pain in the merger.

"We don't see some of the thrash [the leadership] goes through to make the blended wing come together," said Maj. Wayne Brackins, assistant director of operations for the 330th Combat Training Squadron who deployed for the Iraq war. "By the time it got down to us, it had been worked out relatively well."

Culture was an area of concern for Guardsmen and active-duty airmen who deployed, said Brackins, an active-duty member. Both groups have unique methods for deployment, different ways of communicating, and their own schedules.

"There tends to be a different mind-

● See **BLENDED**, page 10

Controllers receive AFA team award

By Tech. Sgt. David A. Jablonski

Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Five tactical-air command and control airmen accepted the Air Force Association's Air Force Outstanding Team of the Year award July 14 in Arlington, Va.

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray coordinates with command chief master sergeants to select the career field to receive the award. The chiefs then work with career-field managers to select five people to accept the award on behalf of their peers.

One of the airmen recognized has been so before. Technical Sgt. Shawn Minyon, from the 13th Air Support Operations Squadron, Fort Carson, Colo., was recently awarded the Bronze Star by Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander for his service during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Other airmen recognized at the ceremony were:

— Staff Sgt. Scott T. Ball, from the 2nd Air Support Operations Squadron at Wuerzburg, Germany.

— Staff Sgt. Joseph S. Hren, from the 25th Fighter Squadron at Osan Air Base, South Korea.

— Staff Sgt. Kevin D. Vance, from the 17th ASOS at Hunter Army Air Field, Ga.

— Tech. Sgt. Scott J. Grotbo,

from the Illinois Air National Guard's 169th ASOS.

Controllers primarily perform and manage tactical-air control party operations and provide Air Force assistance and expertise in planning and controlling combat air operations. They also operate and supervise networks to support Army ground maneuver units.

Although the five representatives accepted the award, it was the career field that won, Vance said.

"It's not about us; it's about the career field," he said. "I find it difficult to be here when there are so many (people) who have accomplished so much more."

The award reinforces the importance of the team concept and of accomplishing their mission, according to Minyon.

"Staying alive and having the team intact," is an important way to measure the success of a tactical-air control party, Minyon said. Teamwork,

and cohesiveness allowed controllers to help liberate Kandahar, Afghanistan, and evacuate the Afghani president.

"It's teamwork with the joint services," he said. "There may be only one or two Air Force guys among 12 Army, but we're not distinguished as a separate service. There is no difference — we're shooters just like them. We have the same goal."


Another recipient explained the "transparency" within the career field.



photo by Army Spec. Matt Millham

Lieutenant General Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander, Tech. Sgt. William Burgum, Tech. Sgt. Reynaldo Garate, and Tech. Sgt. Shawn Minyon listen as a medal citation is read during a ceremony Feb. 20 at Fort Carson, Colo. The three forward air controllers from the 13th Air Support Operations Squadron received Bronze Star Medals from Carlson for their combat service in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Minyon has also accepted the Air Force Association Air Force Outstanding Team of the Year award July 14.

"In Operation Enduring Freedom, nobody knew that I was an Air National guardsman until I told them," Grotbo said. "There's no difference. We're all the same whether active duty, Guard or Reserve."

According to AFA officials, team of the year awards honor the enlisted professionals who display superior technical expertise, attract the praise of their superiors and provide leadership and inspiration to their co-workers. 

The "Mighty Eighth" Voice

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Aerospace Warrior Attitude

**Tech. Sgt. Art Hoven**

55th AMXS/1st AMU

Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

Years of service: 12**Hometown:** Springfield, Ill.**Family:** Wife Linda, sons Alec and Riley, and daughter Shanna**Job title:** E-4B Dedicated Crew Chief**Primary duties and responsibilities:**

Manage, coordinate, and perform maintenance on a 747-200, E-4B aircraft directly supporting National Airborne Operations Center, and the 1st Airborne Command and Control Squadron.

Most rewarding job aspect:

Watching a plane the size of a building get airborne and know you and your team helped put it there.

Goals: To retire from the Air Force leaving it better than when I came in.

I'm most proud of: The support from my family. I know the smile at the door when I leave TDY is not always a happy smile, but a smile none the less.

My best asset: My wife. I wouldn't be where I am today without her support.

What motivates your winning attitude:

Knowing our hard work in a post 9/11 world is allowing America to continue to live in freedom.

Favorite aspects of Offutt Air Force Base:

The diversity of having all branches of the military to work with and being close to a major city.

Eighth Air Force Salutes!

Eagle pin on

Colonel Jeffry Smith (center) gets pinned to colonel by his father, Lt. Gen. Carl Smith (USAF ret.) and wife, Cheryl during a promotion ceremony July 7. Smith is the deputy commander of the 608th Air Operations Group.

*photo by Airman 1st Class Kevin Camara*

Quarterly Award winners

Congratulations to the Headquarters' 2nd Quarter Award winners:

Airman

♦**Airman 1st Class Patrick Polomsky**
712th Air Support Operations Squadron, Fort Hood, Texas

NCO

♦**Staff Sgt. Justin Hand**
819th Red Horse Squadron, Malmstrom AFB, Mont.

Senior NCO

♦**Master Sgt. Kevin Armstrong**
819th Red Horse Squadron, Malmstrom AFB, Mont.

Civilian, GS-8 and below

♦**Alice Malcolm**
8th Air Force History Office, Barksdale AFB, La.

Civilian, GS-9 and above

♦**Larry Grice**
608th Air Support Squadron, Barksdale AFB, La.

Senior NCO

♦**Master Sgt. Kevin Armstrong**
819th Red Horse Squadron, Malmstrom AFB, Mont.

*photo by Capt. Denise Kerr*

Award presentation

Eighth Air Force commander, Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson (left) presents Col. Raymond Michael, director, 8th Air Force Information Operations division, with the Meritorious Service Medal citation July 7. Michael departed the "Mighty Eighth" for the Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

8AF showcases major singing talent

By Maj. Nori LaRue

8th Air Force Public Affairs

A major here has figured out a way to combine the arts, patriotism and recruiting into one activity that has been enjoyed by thousands of people.

Maj. Katherine Strus, director of personnel, 8th Air Force, has been dazzling both military and civilian audiences with her rendition of the national anthem since 1992 when she entered active duty at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

"I will never forget my first function. I was standing at the podium facing the crowd, and the first three rows were nothing but O-5s and O-6s in uniform," said Strus. "I was nervous, so I focused on someone's ribbons so I wouldn't look at all the people."

Ever since then, if there was a ceremony, someone would invite her to sing. She sang at a couple of dining - ins at Lackland, and a few luncheons at Luke AFB, Ariz. Most recently, she sang *The Star-Bangled Banner* during the 608th Air Communications Squadron's change of command ceremony, and *God Bless the USA* for the Shreveport Sports baseball team on July 5 and 25. When she sang July 5, it was their largest crowd this season with 2,800 people in attendance.

"It's a wonderful opportunity to be an Air Force ambassador to go out and sing at these venues," said Strus. She sang at a televised Dallas Burn soccer game, and there were 8,900 people there.

"There were a lot of retired military folks on the staff, and they came up and talked to me. I was also approached by young kids in Junior ROTC, and they were thinking about joining the military some day. It's an overwhelming compliment, and I am thankful for the opportunity to be able to do it," she said. "The Air Force has done so much for my family, so I like to be able to be an ambassador and tell people how proud I am of our military. I think of my trips as



photo by Master Sgt. Rick DeLaHaya

Major Kat Strus performs "*The Star-Spangled Banner*" during a recent change of command ceremony. Strus has been performing the national anthem for both military and civilian audiences since she entered the Air Force in 1992.

little recruiting trips. People will ask me what the military is like, and they will share their stories with me. They realize we are people too, and that it isn't just what they see on CNN. I like to talk about the great things we're doing in 8th Air Force, and the places we've been. I will give them web sites and points of contact to learn more about the military."

She was always in band and music. Her mother always took her and her sister to musicals. She was always on a dance team or cheerleading, but she didn't start singing until she started working on her master's degree at Texas A&M.

One day, she and her boyfriend were crossing the street, and he stopped her in the middle of the turn lane.

"He would not let me cross the street until I sang to him. So, I sang Journey's *Open Arms* to him. I'll never forget it," Strus said.

He would take her to different places on campus where the acoustics were good and have her sing to him. After she was commissioned, she got away from singing until she performed at Lackland.

"I will never forget this wonderful chief who would come up to me after every performance, and she held my hands and would say, 'It just makes the hair on my neck stand up every time I hear you sing.'"

Her mother had given her a card when she was a little kid. It had her name on one side, and on the other side was a reading from Psalms 28:7 which said, "The Lord is my strength and my shield. My heart trusted in him; therefore, I am helped so my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song will I praise him." Strus still has the card, and each time before she sings, she closes her eyes and says that little prayer.

"I let his little angels take over. It's my way of saying, 'It's not my voice. I'm just your little instrument do with me what you will,' she said."

Strus has no desire to sing professionally or to record a CD of her own. She recorded the National Anthem on CD, so she could send it out as an

● See MAJOR , page 11

● **CAOC, from page 1**

ter integrate information operations into the air operations center,” added Wilson. “The new CAOC layout will allow us to do real-time targeting for both kinetic and non-kinetic effects.”

An example of a kinetic effect is when a bomb blows up a specific target. “We basically target something and destroy it,” Wilson said. Non-kinetic effects are those things that influence the enemy’s capabilities without using massive firepower to destroy them.

An example of a non-kinetic effect would be like a B-52 dropping leaflets. “It may have a psychological effect on the adversary. For another example, let’s say we want to turn the power off in a building. There are ways to achieve that effect without blowing up the building,” said Wilson.

Besides the added space for a SCIF, the new CAOC facility is also getting new carpeting, a new heating, ventilation and air conditioning unit, larger bathrooms, a dining area and café, a new sprinkler system, an alarm, and copper telephone wiring and fiber optics.

During a major exercise like BLUE FLAG, there are usually 800 participants or more. At any one time, the CAOC will house around 400 or more people and all the computers and peripherals systems that support the exercise.

One of the important renovations to the CAOC was to have the 2nd CS put additional fiber optic lines and telephone cable in the building. “We were short of copper telephone service lines in that facility,” said Ken Hebert, chief of planning and implementations, 2nd CS. “It has been very difficult to sustain large exercises there because of the shortages of telephone cable. This project is going to add telephone cable and a redundant fiber optic path into that facility. Right now, it gets its network services from one location on base. If it goes down, there is no back up capability. In the future, they will not be dependent on connectivity to the network in one direction. They will have another path to send and receive data,” he said.

This project was funded by Headquarters Air Combat Command because it was identified by 2nd CS as one of their top 10

Right: Roy Martin threads and cuts pipe for the new sprinkler system that will be installed in the renovated Combined Air and Space Operations Center. The major overhaul and updated telecommunication project is part of a \$3.5 million renovation.

requirements from Barksdale from a communications perspective.

“ACC has helped us arrange to have the 212th Engineering and Installation Squadron, from the Massachusetts Air National Guard, come here and install the fiber and copper cable for us. The fiber they install external to the building will also be run to the new Refill Pharmacy as well as to the CAOC. The cost of this project is approximately \$280,000 and should begin around mid-November of this year,” Hebert said.

The last time the CAOC was used for an exercise was Blue Flag in Feb. 2002. 8 AF had to cancel the Blue Flag scheduled for October 2003 because the headquarters personnel will be deployed in late September 2003. The timing for the CAOC renovation worked out well though, as construction will be complete by Nov. 30, 2003. 8 AF plans to begin scheduling training and exercises in the new CAOC by January 2004.

“We are trying to align our major exercises with our air expeditionary force rotation. After this fall’s rotation, we are scheduled for the next rotation starting in March 2005, so I would expect a major exercise in mid-January of 2005 or about six to eight weeks prior to deploying,” said Wilson. “It would be a major validation event so the joint force commander and the air component commander can say ‘that’s my team, and they are good to go.’”

There may be two or three smaller events before Blue Flag, and they may involve only the plans squadron or the operations squadron, or maybe a combination of the two, but it won’t be a full-fledged, large-scale training event.



photo by Maj. Nori LaRue

“In addition to that, we are also planning on having all the 8th Air Force wings participate in quarterly training events where we exercise horizontally through all the wings such as the U-2s at Beale, the AWACS at Tinker, JSTARS at Warner Robbins, EC-130s at Davis-Monthan as well as our traditional B-52 and B-2 bomber assets,” Wilson said. “We are going to put those all together with our 3rd Air Support Operations Group at Ft. Hood, Texas, and exercise pieces of those with the CAOC on a quarterly basis. We plan to start out quarterly, but within the next year move to exercising every month. There will also be other events in the CAOC like STRATCOM’s Global Guardian exercise which is run through Task Force 204 and STRATCOM’s initiative called Global Strike,” Wilson said.

“The CAOC is all about the command and control of airpower,” said Wilson. “I think we just saw a very good demonstration of that in Operation Iraqi Freedom. We went over there, and our folks manned key positions in the CAOC, did a wonderful job. Now we are taking the lessons learned from our experience and will incorporate those lessons in our training, testing, and exercises in the new CAOC facility.”



photo by Master Sgt. Francis Dupuis

The B-2 named "Spirit of Missouri" returns to Whiteman Air Force Base after a bombing mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. During the war, pilots were flying 30-plus hour sorties to accomplish missions launched from here.

Task Force View opens private doors

By JO1(SW) Rick Collins

USSTRATCOM Public Affairs

WHITEMAN AIR FORCE BASE, Mo.— About 60 miles east of Kansas City, Mo., and just south of Interstate 70, lies a small rural community called Knob Noster. While the town's name might bring a smile, its 2,000 residents support a serious mission.

Whiteman Air Force Base is the home of the most advanced fleet of strategic bombers the world has ever known, the B-2 Spirit stealth bomber.

Recently, a 13-person team from U.S. Strategic Command made a three-day sortie to the base to gather first-hand information about the intricate relationship between the nation's stealthiest aircraft and the command that regards the 21 bat-winged bombers as vital players in its Global Strike mission.

"Task Force View is a seven-year-old program designed to bring people from within the many STRATCOM units throughout the country together to share ideas, experiences and learn more from

face-to-face contact than they could learn from a phone call or a piece of paper," said Lt. Col. Tom Dolney, USSTRATCOM's Task Force View program coordinator. He explained that participants are nominated by their directorates, then the list is whittled down to no more than 15 individuals, which is the maximum amount allowed per visit.

The visit began with a series of briefings by Capt. David Benson, Whiteman's Task Force View coordinator and a B-2 pilot. He opened the door to a world of information about the B-2 not normally available to those "without a need to know."

For three days, participants got "up close and personal" with the oddly shaped planes and the people who pilot and support them. Maj. Patrick Sanden, an analyst within STRATCOM's joint personnel programs division, described the tour as a rare opportunity for him to get "the big picture from the pilot's point of view" which, in turn, would help him and others deploy the B-2 in support of

USSTRATCOM's Global Strike mission.

On the first day, Benson briefed the Offutt visitors about the B-2 including its war record to date, its weapons inventory, and its operational capabilities.

"It's amazing. Everything I had known about a B-2 came from air shows and on paper," said Capt. Joe Rodriguez, an Airborne Battle Staff logistic planner assigned to one of six Airborne Command Post battle staff teams. Rodriguez's job is to coordinate the return of all U.S. bombers, tankers and reconnaissance aircraft in the event of a national emergency.

"I don't have a strategic bomber background so this is good exposure to the B-2, and this has given me a good understanding of what the aircraft can do that I never had before," Rodriguez said. "As a planner, this information will help me do my job better."

Lt. Col. Bert Tomasino works in USSTRATCOM's Combat Support directorate as chief, Bomber Architecture,

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● TASK FORCE, from page 8

where he deals with present and future communications requirements as well as command and control and computer issues involving all Air Force bombers. His background includes 2,000 flight hours in B-52 bombers so the Whiteman visit not only allowed him to talk with other pilots, but also allowed him to match faces to the voices of people he often talks to or might need to talk to in the future.

"It helped me establish contacts in some of the offices (there)," Tomasino said. "Knowing the right folks to talk to who are involved with certain programs and meeting them face-to-face always helps later on when I call them trying to get something done."

This is the second time Peggy

Kawalczyk, a financial advocate within the Systems Support Branch directorate, has participated in the Task Force View program. She said her office is responsible for the budget requirements and management of the Strategic War Planning System, which supports Global Strike people including those assigned to the 509th Bomb Wing, the host wing at Whiteman AFB.

As an advocate, she knows how this program can directly impact her job. Kawalczyk recalled when she had to ask for funding so USSTRATCOM could acquire computer programming used only in the B-2 community.

Although the money was approved, she said being able to see what the B-2 does would have given her a stronger perspective in advocating for the funding.

"During a briefing I was at kind of a loss to explain why we needed this funding because I only had a basic level of understanding," Kawalczyk said. "I'd never seen a B-2 before. Now I can better understand its unique characteristics and how that fits into our planning process back at STRATCOM. It's nice to come out to the units and talk to them to see what works, what doesn't, what's confusing them, what we can do to make the processes easier and better."

The chance to sit in the B-2's cockpit was a thrill for the participants. But it also whetted their appetites for more. Although flying one of the more than \$2 billion aircraft wasn't a possibility, crawling into a simulator was.

"If I get this thing airborne, all you have to do is show me where the auto pilot and phasers are," said an excited participant to Benson prior to starting the simulator.

What looked like an unexplainable quandary of buttons, gauges and panels to the non-pilot guests brought quite a different reaction from those with flying experience.

"Having only four engines instead of eight like the B-52s, this cockpit wasn't as littered with buttons, lights and gauges as the B-52s," Tomasino said. "It was a lot easier to make sense of the B-2 cockpit than it was a B-52."

While the Omaha visitors were getting the royal treatment - from their rooms to the openness of all the people they met there, Tomasino said he felt his hosts were also benefiting from the information sharing.

"I think it's important for the folks we're visiting, too," Tomasino said.

This was the 23rd orientation visit arranged through the command-sponsored and funded exchange program since its inception. Previous Task Force View visits have taken USSTRATCOM military and civilian employees to bases around the country including visits to submarines berthed in Washington and Georgia; missile silos in Wyoming and North Dakota; B-52 and bomber bases in Louisiana and North Dakota and the mammoth refueling hub at March Air Force Base in Southern California.

AWACS technicians get first paperless link

By Chief Master Sgt. Lee Carvalho

Airborne Warning and Control System Program Office

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla.

— The E-3 Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System became the first weapon system to provide technicians with a paperless link between an aircraft parts manual and the base supply system.

Technicians from the 552nd Equipment Maintenance Squadron here have been participating in a test program for a parts ordering tool that provides an electronic link between AWACS parts manuals and the supply system.

The ordering tool allows technicians to order parts in a totally paperless environment. The system eliminates the need to search for the part in a paper manual and type in all the information, which saves time and reduces errors.

"We did in 10 minutes what used to take hours," said Tech. Sgt. Thomas Martin, 552nd EMS dock chief, in


reference to a recent inspection.

Basically, the tool allows the technician to electronically search for parts, click on the items to be ordered, review and query the required parts list and submit the request through the automated system.

This technology can eventually be applied to wireless local area network devices, such as rugged laptops, for maintenance.

The new tool is expected to save at least 160 man-hours and 25 incorrect parts orders per day when fully implemented throughout the 552nd Air Control Wing here, officials said.

Although the system is not yet fully operational, users have noticed a significant reduction in time spent and are excited about the system's capabilities, they said.

"Out of several projects I'm involved with, I see the need and benefit of (the ordering tool) to the Air Force in the long term," said Master Sgt. Rick Celusta, the 552nd Maintenance Operations Flight superintendent. 

● **BLENDED, from page 3**

set sometimes just from what you've been used to," Brackins said. "I think that's probably one of the things that caused apprehension prior to the blending. How are all of those cultures going to come together in one wing?"

Deployed personnel told Air Force Times that their idiosyncrasies were put aside in the face of the enemy.

Maj. Mark Austell, an active-duty pilot with the 116th, commanded a flight-deck crew that was half Guard.

"When we got the order to deploy, it didn't make any difference who was what and how they got paid," Austell said. "We were all one team, one family, one fight."

Growing pains

While the troops have meshed well, administrative obstacles remain.

One of the biggest is personnel assignments. The active-duty and Guard components have separate rosters called "manning documents" that detail the positions and ranks within the wing.

"The problem is ... an active-duty manpower document ... doesn't have visibility on the Guard side," Lynn said, noting the reverse is true for the Guard roster. "So, they see a vacancy and they're going to put someone in versus us having total flexibility to man [the position] within the wing."

Lynn and Col. Mark Hall, vice commander of the 116th, are trying to create a joint manning document. It likely would require approval from the Washington D.C.-based National Guard Bureau and Air Combat Command. However, there is no model to follow for this so they largely are on their own to determine how to proceed.

Another impediment to the merger was Title 10 of the U.S. Code, the document that lays out military law. Title 10 states a Guard officer cannot command active-duty personnel on a base in the continental United States, according to retired Maj. Gen. Paul Weaver, former commander of the Air National Guard.

As such, Lynn, a career Guardsman

who has been selected for promotion to brigadier general, does not have authority over the active-duty elements in the wing. Instead, Hall is the "active-duty element commander."

"When it comes to [Uniformed Code of Military Justice] actions, when it comes to promotions, senior rater endorsements ... I do those on the active-duty side," Hall said. "We make that work because, as I do all of those different events, I still flow it up to him because he's the boss."

Legislation is pending in Congress to give commanders of blended wings both Title 10 and Title 32 authority, the statute that governs Guard operations. The Senate Armed Services Committee added the language to their version of the fiscal 2004 Defense Authorization Bill. Weaver expects the House committee to accept the language before the full Congress votes on the bill later this year.

"The authority only goes with the position, not the individual," Weaver said, noting that the 116th is a Guard unit. Picked by the state adjutant general and the commander of Air Combat Command, each new commander can be either active duty or Guard.

Issues facing the unit have run the gamut from streamlining funding sources to even something as seemingly simple as standardizing fitness tests. The active duty administers and ergo bike test and the Guard administers a step test.

"There are things we discover every day where we say, 'Whoa, we hadn't thought of that one,'" Lynn said. "We just work through them."

The future of the total force

Though the 116th is the first wing to incorporate both active-duty and Reserve components, it may not be the last.

One advantage to blended wings, according to Roche, is that they allow the Air Force to combat the issue of aging aircraft that plagues the Guard and Reserve, which typically operate the oldest planes in the inventory.


Sharing new aircraft would create a trickle-down effect, allowing Reserve

components to sooner retire their older aircraft — some of which are more than 40 years old.

"Are their Guard places that have old planes that we might be far better to do a blended wing and get F/A-22s into the Guard earlier?" Roche asked during an April interview. "We don't know how many spots in the country that will actually work, but that would be one way of being able to ... get rid of more of the old."

Another advantage of merging the components is the continuity brought by the Air National Guard, a state unit that answers to the governor. Guardsmen typically stay in a particular position many years beyond their active-duty counterparts so they have more experience in performing their missions.

However many more blended wings the Air Force leadership decides to form, Lynn and Hall say they are trying to create a guide for those commanders to follow.

"We're the first of these," Lynn said. "Will there be more? ... Will [they] be exactly this template? I don't know." 

(Editor's Note: This article first ran in the July 28 edition of Air Force Times and is reprinted with permission.)

E-8C JSTARS General Characteristics

Primary Function: Airborne battle management

Power Plant: Four Pratt and Whitney TF33-102C

Thrust: 19,200 pounds each engine

Length: 152 feet, 11 inches

Height: 42 feet 6 inches

Wingspan: 145 feet, 9 inches

Speed: Optimum orbit speed 390 - 510 knots (Mach 0.52 - 0.65)

Ceiling: 42,000 feet (12,802 meters)

Maximum Takeoff Weight: 336,000 pounds

Range: 9 hours (unrefueled)

Unit Cost: \$244.4 million (fiscal 98 constant dollars)

Crew: Flight crew of four plus 15 Air Force and three Army specialists (crew size varies according to mission)

Date Deployed: 1996

● **MAJOR, from page 2**

audition for public venues.

"I am very shy. I don't want to call great attention to myself," Strus said. "When I sing, it's not about me. Both of my parents were enlisted, and the Air Force has taken care of me my entire life, especially after my father passed away in 1972. I was commissioned through ROTC in May 1991. When I came on active duty in 1992, I asked myself, 'What can I give back?' My singing is a gift that has been given to me to share with others. When someone asks me to sing, I prefer to stand in the back because I believe the focus should be on the flag. People should focus on the lyrics and what they are saying. Every now and then, I get very teary-eyed because, like a lot of people, I have friends who have died. It's about focusing on why we are here."

"I remember singing at a Fort Worth

Cats game at their opening season. I was standing there in uniform, and the flag was unfurling in the wind. The police and firefighters were out at center field holding the Texas Rangers' American flag. The players were standing on the base lines. I was standing on home plate, and people were standing up in the stands. It was one of those quick snapshot moments where I thought 'Only in America can we do this.' Only because of the people who came before me can we be here today free to watch a baseball game. That's what it's all about. The freedom we have been able to enjoy because of the work we do for a living. That's what's more important than just singing to me," said Strus.

Although she has sang at many large public venues like Texas Motor Speedway (TMS), a National League Hockey game, San Antonio Spurs NBA game, Dallas Burn Major League Soccer,

Shreveport Sports Minor League Baseball, Shreveport Mudbugs Hockey, and San Antonio Speedway Weekly NASCAR Racing Events, to name a few, she prefers the smaller, personal gigs.

"I have sang at many venues in front of thousands of people (the largest venues she ever sang at was in front of more than 15,000 people at TMS and later that evening for an ESPN Friday Night Fights event), but to me, there is nothing more special than having a friend ask me if I would sing at their promotion or retirement. This is something personable about a family, and that to me is like the ultimate rush," said Strus. "One of the hardest things I've ever had to do was sing at a memorial service when I was in Korea. Because we were at a host nation, I had to sing two national anthems—ours and the Korean national anthem in their native language, Hongul. I had to sing from behind the curtains because it was so emotional for me. I could not go out in front of the 800 people in the theater, and people were even standing outside. I had met this person only once, but because of the military family everyone from Osan Air Base was there.

"I enjoy being able to give and contribute to whatever that moment is for someone's memory. When I sing, some of the neatest compliments I receive are from veterans coming up and just saying, 'Thank you.' I turn around and thank them because it's because of them that I am now able to serve. I feel very blessed to work for a very supportive commander who concurs with my requests to take 'little AF recruiting trips'."

Singing is a large part of her life. Every now and then, she goes home and turns on the stereo and just sings.

"There is so much joy inside that needs to get out, and the only way I really know how to do that is to sing," said Strus. "Celine Dion and Whitney Houston are my favorites because of the ranges of their voices."

She prefers to sing acappella because there are no limits. "I can do so many different things playing with my voice. I plan on taking care of my vocal chords because I'd love to keep singing well into my eighties." 🎤

Welcome to the "Mighty Eighth"

*The following people joined the Headquarters
8th Air Force team in June:*

♦ **Airman Glenn Waldron**

608th Air Communications Squadron

♦ **Airman 1st Class Laura Fairbanks**

26th Operational Weather Squadron

♦ **Airman 1st Class Neel Rodgers**

26th Operational Weather Squadron

♦ **Senior Airman William Roberts II**

608th Air Communications Squadron

♦ **Master Sgt. Robert Baker**

26th Operational Weather Squadron

♦ **Master Sgt. David Bennet**

608th Air Support Squadron

♦ **Master Sgt. Joseph Spacek**

608th Air Support Squadron

♦ **2nd Lt. Karen Rupp**

8th Air Force/CVE

♦ **1st Lt. Duncan Levenberger**

608th Air Communications Squadron

♦ **Capt. Sean Coveney**

8th Air Force Stan/Eval

♦ **Maj. Christopher DeVaughn**

608th Combat Plans Squadron



♦ **Maj. Driller Fiegel**

8th Air Force Stan/Eval

♦ **Maj. James Kimbrough**

8th Air Force Stan/Eval

♦ **Maj. Carol Northrup**

608th Air Intelligence Squadron

♦ **Maj. Dan Willson**

608th Combat Operations Squadron

♦ **Lt. Col. Anthony Faughn**

608th Air Communications Squadron

♦ **Lt. Col. Michael Fleck**

608th Combat Plans Squadron

♦ **Col. Daniel Jones**

608th Air Intelligence Squadron

♦ **Col. Thomas Schrader**

8th Air Force/IO Integration Division



photo by Airman Brandi Branch

Senior Airman Harold Tolbert, 9th Civil Engineering Squadron heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration apprentice, repairs an HVAC unit.

Beale airman selected as one of 12 Outstanding Airmen

From Staff reports

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN) —


When the Air Force recently announced the top enlisted members, one of the “Mighty Eighth’s” own was named one of the 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year for 2003.

Senior Airman Harold Tolbert II, 9th Civil Engineering Squadron, Beale Air Force Base, Calif., was among the forty-six nominees representing major commands, direct reporting units and air staff agencies.

Tolbert was also named as

one of 8th Air Force’s Outstanding Airmen of the Year.

The top 12 were chosen by an Air Force selection board, which convened in May, based on superior leadership, job performance and personal achievements.

Tolbert and the 11 other winners will be formally recognized during the Air Force Association National Convention in September, and will serve as members of the AFA’s Enlisted Advisory Council for the next year. (Courtesy of Air Force Personnel Center News) 

AF releases 2004 base realignments

From Staff reports


WASHINGTON

(AFPN) — The Air Force will lose 2,260 military and 2,839 civilian manpower positions, and 1,055 reserve drill authorizations next year, according to the 2004 force-structure announcement released July 23. Many bases, both active duty and reserve components, are affected by the realignment. In many cases, units will

gain aircraft and missions, while others will pare down. Besides manpower reductions, the realignment formally announces the retirement of the C-9A Nightingale and KC-135E Stratotanker aircraft. According to Air Force

officials, the 20 C-9s are being retired because of reduced-patient movement, range limitations and increasing maintenance and upgrade costs. The aeromedical-evacuation mission will become a requirements-based system using all passenger-capable aircraft. The service will retire 44 of the Air

National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command’s 43-year-old KC-135Es next year, replacing them with

24 KC-135Rs from the active-duty fleet. By the end of fiscal 2006, the Air Force will have retired 68 of the KC-135Es. For the complete list of realignments, visit www.af.mil/forcestructure04/force_structure2004.html. 



“Mighty Eighth’s” newest majors

Congratulations to 8th Air Force Headquarters newest major selectees:

- Brian Ault**
608th Air Communications Squadron
- Arlene Collazo**
608th Combat Plans Squadron
- Carl Grant**
8th Air Force/Information Operations Division
- Mark Mitchem**
608th Air Intelligence Squadron
- Christian Wendler**
8th Air Force/Information Operations Division



New 5th BW commander takes helm

By Airman Katherine E. Booher
Minot Air Force Base Public Affairs

MINOT AIR FORCE BASE, N.D. – Minot Air Force Base and the 5th Bomb Wing welcomed their new commander July 11 during a change-of-command ceremony at Dock 7.

Col. Greg Biscone assumed command of the base and the wing from Brig. Gen. Kevin Kennedy as Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander, presided over the ceremony.

The formal change of command took place as the guidon was passed from General Kennedy to Colonel Biscone. General Kennedy received his final salute from his troops and after the guidon was passed, Biscone received his first.

General Carlson lauded General Kennedy's accomplishments and wished him the best as he headed to United States Strategic Command at Offutt Air

Force Base in Omaha, Neb.

"This base and this community will miss you and your family a great deal," General Carlson said. "You have improved housing, kept the troops physically fit and took care of the families that were deployed. I know you will take that kind of leadership with you to STRATCOM."

General Carlson also spoke highly of Colonel Biscone and said the 5th BW is lucky to be getting such an experienced commander.

"Col. Greg Biscone is more than qualified to continue leading this wing and this base in the right direction," General Carlson said. "I am confident that he and his wife Debbie will exceed what they have accom-

plished at Whiteman [Air Force Base, Mo.] and do great things for Minot Air Force Base, the 5th BW and the 91st Space Wing."

Colonel Biscone said he and his wife had never received a warmer welcome on or off base anywhere, and said he would continue to strengthen the relationship between the base and downtown community in Minot.

"We look forward to building on the reputation of Minot, the Warbirds and the



photos by Staff Sgt. Jocelyn Rich

Rough Riders as [one of] trust, teamwork and excellence," Colonel Biscone said.

Colonel Biscone also said the spirit of the base is unlike anything he's felt before and he said he was committed to keeping that spirit alive.

"The magic in the Team Minot spirit seems to make people better," Colonel Biscone said. "I'm proud to be a part of that team and I will work hard to protect that spirit."

Colonel Biscone most recently served as the 509th Operations Group commander at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.

General Kennedy is headed to U.S. STRATCOM to serve as the Director of Strike Warfare. 🇺🇸



Left: Lieutenant Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander, passes the 5th Bomb Wing guidon to Col. Greg Biscone, 5th BW commander, during a change of command ceremony July 11 at Dock 7. **Above:** Colonel Greg Biscone, new 5th Bomb Wing commander, salutes his airmen for the first time during the bomb wing's change of command ceremony.



photo by Airman 1st Class Kevin Camara

Passing the torch

Lieutenant Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander (left) passes the guidon to the new 608th Air Intelligence Squadron commander, Col. Daniel Jones during a ceremony July 7. Jones takes over as commander from Col. Philip Riede, who departed to the 612th Intelligence Group, Davis Monthan, Ariz.

Defense Department chooses Barksdale for munitions detection test program

By 2nd Lt. Cyrena Wooster
2nd Bomb Wing Public Affairs

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La.—Barksdale has been chosen as the first pilot project location for the Military Munitions Response Program to clean up closed, transferred and transferring ranges in preparation for future use.

The Defense Department was directed to develop a complete inventory of MMRP sites, to assign each site a relative priority for action, and to report to Congress an estimate of the projected remediation costs. Currently, the Air Force has identified 240 potential sites. The early stages of the program will focus on in-depth range assessments. The MMRP is preparing for these preliminary assessments by gathering data at several pilot locations.

"This program is a good start for making areas safe for general usage," said Wallace Robertson, 2nd Civil Engineer Squadron, environmental cleanup project manager. "This will be a

good test for the equipment to see if it works at a range that has been closed for so long."

At Barksdale, the following activities were planned for the MMRP for July.

- Burial of known inert munitions items in a predetermined location to establish background conditions for the field instruments. This "test pilot" is a tool to evaluate instrument response and performance on known sites.

- Site preparations of overgrown areas, to include clearing foliage and vegetation in order to set up survey sites.

- Visual and instrument surveys of historically designated buffer zones that are outside of the target area.


- Visual and instrument surveys of historically designated target areas with a likelihood of unexploded ordnance.

Data gathered from the pilot project will validate the MMRP's current cost estimating tools with field data and evaluate field instruments and survey methods for MMRP ranges. The data will also identify program guidance and

policy requirements needed for successful implementation at future ranges, as well as refine the MMRP plan for Air Force-wide implementation.

Barksdale was chosen as the first test site for the MMRP because "Barksdale was ahead of the game," said Robertson. "We had been gathering quality information about the base for some time, and it paid off because they chose us."

The new equipment conducts a geophysical survey with detectors that send an electrical or magnetic impulse into the ground. When the signal bounces back up to the detector, a reading device interprets the data, distinguishing between natural soil and ordnance.

"This new equipment cuts weeks off of analysis time; data can be analyzed on-site," said Robertson. "Plus, this test program will help make Barksdale a safer place. The survey done near the housing areas and hiking trails will reduce the chance of someone stumbling across ordnance." 

608th ACOMS welcomes new commander

Lieutenant Gen. Bruce Carlson, 8th Air Force commander (left) passes the guidon to the new 608th Air Communications Squadron commander, Lt. Col. Anthony Faughn as Chief Master Sgt. Dan Moran looks on during a ceremony July 24. Faughn takes over as commander from Col. Ted Campbell Jr., who will retire in August after 26 years of military service.



photo by Airman Sonya Padilla



photo by Airman Sonya Padilla

Final send off!

Colonel Michael Reese, 8th Air Force Director of Staff, receives the traditional hose down from his wife, Annie, after his final flight July 25, as sons Riley and Elliott watch. Reese will retire this month after 28 years of military service, the final three spent in his current position.